

WEST VIRGINIA
-ELECTION CONNECTION-
Your source for Election News from Secretary of State Natalie E. Tennant

Issue 11 – December 20, 2011

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20 Weeks Until the May Primary!

On Tuesday, December 20 there will be exactly 20 weeks until the May Primary!

Important Messages From Secretary Tennant Coming Soon

Be on the lookout for two messages from Secretary Tennant in the next few days detailing two items of interest to county clerks. The first message will provide specifics for filing the required county plan for voter list sales (W.Va. Code 3-2-30). To assist with this required filing, the Secretary has provided an easy-to-use plan template. The second message will describe how counties may request a reimbursement from the Secretary of State for costs associated with notifying voters of new legislative districts through publication of a legal ad (up to prescribed limits). The Secretary included these funds in an appropriation request for redistricting expenses earlier this year.

Important Dates To Remember

There are a couple deadlines coming up that you need to remember!

- **January 8, 2012** is the last day to publish a notice for a precinct change prior to the Primary Election.
- **January 9-January 28, 2012** is the candidate filing period.
- **January 10, 2012** is the deadline for County Clerks to notify party chairmen of the pending appointment for Ballot Commissioners.
- And don't forget that the first day of the 2012 Legislative Session is **January 11**.

New Voter Registration Applications

The new design of voter registration applications will be available the first week of January. The Secretary of State's Office has a large back stock of the outgoing version that the counties can still use. It is important to remember that the outgoing version is still valid for purposes of voter registration. If a voter fills out an outgoing form after the new version is available, that person's voter registration will not be affected. The new version of the voter registration form is attached to this email. Several county clerks from around the state reviewed and provided feedback on the new form prior to its approval.

The outgoing voter registration forms from our back stock are still available to counties at no charge. However, if you request old forms shipping costs may apply. Contact Chapman Printing to place your order.

Make Sure Your Precincts Meet ADA Standards

If your county will be using new polling locations for the upcoming elections, please remember to ensure each new location meets ADA standards.

- You may review compliance using the ADA survey developed by West Virginia Advocates: <http://wvadvocates.org/assets/docs/pubs/guides/voting/2010-general/polling-place-survey-2010-general.pdf>
- You may also utilize this comprehensive federal survey: <http://www.ada.gov/votingck.htm>

And remember, there are still limited funds available for ADA upgrades. For more information, please contact Layna Brown in the Secretary of State's Office at lbrown@wvsos.com.

Holder Speaks About Voting Rights

Last week at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, United States Attorney General Eric Holder spoke about voting rights and some possible upcoming legislation. In addition to references to preclearance reviews on some state law changes to the voting process, he also highlighted three areas where he said public support would be "crucial to driving progress - and advancing much needed reform." Those three areas were:

1. **Deceptive Practices and Misinformation Campaigns** - Holder also said that Sen. Schumer (D-NY) and Sen. Cardin (D-MD) will be introducing legislation soon that would address this issue. Both of these Senators were co-sponsors of a similar bill in 2007.
2. **Neutrality in Redistricting Efforts**
3. **Voter Registration Modernization**, which Holder characterized as, citizens are automatically registered to vote by compiling eligible residents from existing databases. He said that registration should be permanent and

portable and that until it is, there should be a fail-safe for voters at the polls to be able to vote a regular ballot as opposed to a provisional ballot.

Federal legislation on "voter registration modernization" as described above has been discussed for several years, but not introduced. There were bills on voter registration modernization introduced in the last Congress but they focused on online voter registration.

Secretary of State's Office Holiday Hours

Please make a note of the Secretary of State's Office holiday hours. The office will be **OPEN** on Friday, December 23. Because Christmas Day falls on a Sunday, the office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, December 26. The office will be **OPEN** on Friday, December 30. However, the office will be **CLOSED** on Monday, January 2, 2012.

Have an idea?

Is there something that you want to see addressed in the Election Connection? The goal of this newsletter is to keep everyone up to date about challenges facing election officials in West Virginia and to inform everyone about best practices that are being put into place. If you have an idea for a topic, have a question, or if you think there is a subject that election officials around the state would be interested in, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary of State's Office. You can contact the Elections Division by email at elections@wvsos.com or (304) 558-6000 or Jake Glance directly at jglance@wvsos.com. Your input is appreciated.